

## Message Text

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ACTION NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 AF-08 ARA-06 EUR-12 EA-07 ISO-00 SSM-03 EB-08

OMB-01 TRSE-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-01 INR-07 L-03

NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 USIA-06

ACDA-07 AID-05 IO-13 /126 W

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R 050612Z MAR 77

FM AMEMBASSY JIDDA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 7495

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AMEMBASSY ALGIERS

AMEMBASSY AMMAN

USINT BAGHDAD

AMEMBASSY BEIRUT

AMEMBASSY CAIRO

AMEMBASSY CARACAS

AMEMBASSY DAMASCAS

AMEMBASSY DOHA

AMEMBASSY JAKARTA

AMEMBASSY JERUSALEM

AMEMBASSY KUWAIT

AMEMBASSY LAGOS

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY MANAMA

AMEMBASSY MOSCOW

AMEMBASSY MUSCAT

AMEMBASSY RABAT

AMEMBASSY SANA

AMEMBASSY TEHRAN

AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV

AMEMBASSY TRIPOLI

AMCONSUL DHAHRAN

C O N F I D E N T I A L JIDDA 1704

E.O. 11652: GDS

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TAGS: PFOR, EFIN, SA, XF

SUBJECT: "IS IT BETTER TO RECEIVE THAN TO GIVE?": SAUDI VIEWS  
ON THE PROBLEM OF AIDING SOME ARAB STATES

REF: DAMASCUS 1299, CAIRO 3410

1. FOLLOWING REFLECTS ATTITUDES OF WELL PLACED SAUDIS TOWARD

PROBLEMS OF AID TO OTHER COUNTRIES AND TOWARD THE WEALTHY LEADERS OF THE POORER NATIONS TO WHOM THE SAUDI GOVERNMENT SENDS FUNDS INTENDED TO BENEFIT THE DEPRIVED ELEMENTS OF THOSE COUNTRIES.

2. THE SAUDIS OF COURSE WOULDN'T WANT THE LEADERS OF NEARBY COUNTRIES TO GO HUNGRY OR TO BE FORCED TO DO THINGS LIKE WALK FROM ONE MINISTRY TO ANOTHER TO SEE EACH OTHER. NOR WOULD THEY URGE THEM TO DRIVE THEIR OWN LIMOUSINES BECAUSE THAT WOULD CONTRADICT A LIFESTYLE WHICH QUITE SURELY IS THE PERQUISITE OF THOSE WHO HAVE ASSUMED THE MISSION OF BRINGING THE GOOD THINGS OF LIFE TO THEIR HELPLESS PEOPLES. THUS, THE SAUDIS SAY NOTHING, ABSOLUTELY NOTHING, NOT EVEN WHEN THE LEADER OF AN IMPOVERISHED COUNTRY ARRIVES FOR A MEETING IN A SPANKING NEW BOEING 747. THEY UNDERSTAND THAT THE GREAT LEADER PURCHASED THE SPLENDID AIRCRAFT ON TICK AND BROUGHT IT TO DISPLAY TO THE FRIEND WHOM HE EXPECTED TO PAY FOR IT. WHAT COULD BE NICER THAN THAT?

3. THE SAUDIS DO, ALAS, OCCASIONALLY HOLD UP TRANSFERS OF FUNDS, ESPECIALLY WHEN THEY SENSE THAT THEIR MONEY IS BEING CHanneLED TOWARD THE SOVIET UNION TO PAY FOR ARMS, AND USED FOR OTHER UNDESIRABLE THINGS. FOR SOME STRANGE REASON THEY OBJECT TO THAT AND HAVE THE FOOLISH NOTION THAT SUCH PURCHASES SHOULD BE MADE FROM THE UNITED STATES OR ANOTHER WESTERN NATION. WHEN THEY INQUIRE ABOUT THE USE TO WHICH THEIR FUNDS HAVE BEEN PUT THEY USUALLY ENCOUNTER SILENCE, OR A FLOOD OF CROCODILE TEARS OR A HAUGHTINESS WHICH THEY FEAR CLOAKS VENALITY OF A KIND, INVOLVING AS IT DOES THEIR LARGESSE, WHICH THEY FIND IT DIFFICULT TO TOLERATE. THAT IS ESPECIALLY TRUE IN CERTAIN NEARBY PLACES WHERE THREE SETS OF BOOKS ARE REPORTEDLY KEPT: ONE FOR THE CONFIDENTIAL

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PEOPLE, ONE FOR FOREIGN CREDITORS, AND A THIRD SET FOR THE LEADER. FOR THE SAUDIS, NOTHING IS AVAILABLE: NO ACCOUNTS, NO GOODS, NO RECEIPTS FOR GOODS PURCHASED, "(NOT EVEN THE DEPOSIT SLIPS." (AS THEY ARE FINANCIALLY QUITE WELL CONNECTED, I SUSPECT THE SAUDIS KNOW A FEW THINGS ABOUT SOME OF THOSE DESPOSIT SLIPS.)

4. THE DISTRUBED FELLINGS OF THE RECIPIENTS WHEN "MORE" IS EXPECTED AND "MORE" DOESN'T COME RIGHT AWAY ARE ENTIRELY UNDERSTANDABLE: THEY GIVE OUT LOUD, AND SIMETIMES RUDE, NOISES. "MORE" IN THE AMOUNT OF TWO BILLION RECENTLY ARRIVED IN ONE PLACE TO BE DENOUNCED AS STINGY. IT DISAPPEARED INTO THE YAWNING ECONOMIC MAW THAT EXISTS THERE TO CRIES THAT IT SHOULD HAVE BEEN 12 BILLION. SO THE SAUDIS ARE PUZZLED. THEY SEND EMISSARIES TO THEIR BROTHERS WITH FIRMER DEMANDS FOR INFORMATION, BUT THUS FAR, IN THE PRESENT PHASE, THEY SEEM MERELY TO HAVE EVOKED ANOTHER OUTBREAK OF ABUSE FROM THE MEDIA IN THOSE PLACES, NONE OF WHICH OF COURSE IS ENCOURAGED BY THE GOVERNMENTS THERE. (THE MEDIA IN THIS REGION ALWAYS REFLECT THE CAREFULLY CONSIDERED VIEW OF THE POPULATIONS.)

5. THERE ARE SAUDIS WHO FEEL THAT THEIR DILIGENTLY MAINTAINED AND RATHER LENGTHY LIST OF CONTRIBUTIONS SHOULD BE MADE PUBLIC, BUT IT IS QUITE POSSIBLE THAT THE FIGURES WOULD CAUSE A COMMOTION HERE OR THERE, AND THE LEADERSHIP IS DISINCLINED TO BRING THAT ABOUT.

6. IN THE MIDDLE EAST, EVERYBODY KNOWS WHO MADE TH E SAUDIS THE WAY THEY ARE, WITH ALL THEIR BILLION-PINCHING WAYS. THOSE AMERICANS FOUND OIL FOR THEM AND TAUGHT THEM TO BE INTERESTED IN WHERE THEIR MONEY GOES TO THE POINT WHERE THE SAUDIS HAVE BECOME TIRESOME, HAVEN'T THEY? "LEND MONEY AND LOSE A FRIEND," THE SAYING GOES. BUT, FOR THE SAUDIS IT'S "GIVE MONEY AND HEAR THE GRIPES." AH WELL, IT'S A TOUGH WORLD, BUT IT IS STILL "BETTER TO GIVE THAN TO RECEIVE," SAY THE SAUDIS WHO CURRENTLY PUT MORE THAN 13 PERCENT OF THEIR TOTAL ANNUAL INCOME INTO FOREIGN AID, THEY SAY.  
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PORTER

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## Message Attributes

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